A DIPLOMAT'S HELPMATE

MARY V. TINGLEY LAWRENCE

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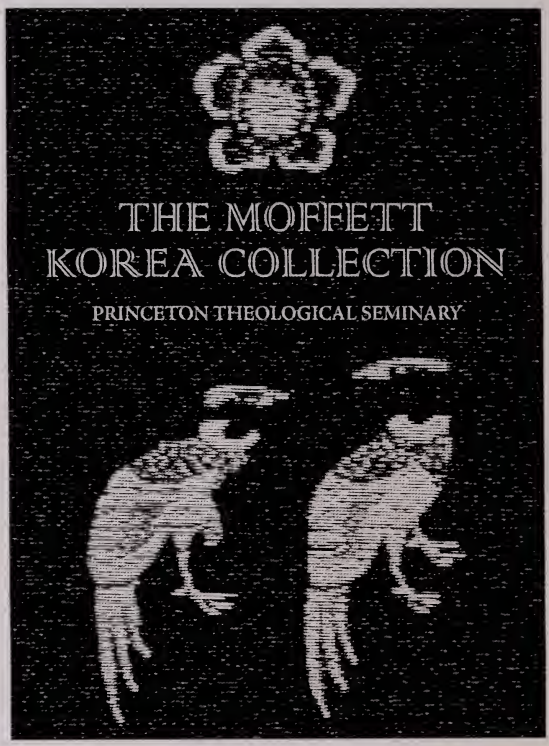
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Mrs. Foote starting for the Palace in the Queen's Palanquin carried by the Royal Chair Bearers and with the King's Guard as escort

A DIPLOMAT'S HELPMATE

HOW ROSE F. FOOTE, WIFE OF THE FIRST U. S. MINISTER AND ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY TO KOREA, SERVED HER COUNTRY IN THE FAR EAST

By

MARY V. TINGLEY LAWRENCE

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TO
MY FRIEND OF LONG YEARS
MRS. PHOEBE A. HEARST
WHOSE LIFE IS A CONTINUOUS
SERVICE TO HUMANITY

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

IN this world war for right no woman has been called upon to essay a more valiant part than Rose F. Foote of California played for American womanhood in the dawn of our country's life in Korea.

As the wife of Lucius Harwood Foote, the first United States Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Korea, she was the first occidental woman to enter the ancient capital, Seoul. She took her place as the American Minister's faithful partner, her intellectual and spiritual preparedness together with her tact and beauty enabling her fully to become his loyal ally in the delicate and portentous tasks that confronted this diplomatic pioneer in the Land of the Morning Calm.

Mrs. Foote's perfect poise, her intuitive diplomacy and her great kindliness daily aided her husband in his unswervingly straightforward course through the sea of oriental intrigue.

The response to the test of service to her fellowmen won for her the confident regard of the peculiar people of Korea and transmuted the bitter antagonism of their powerful Queen into a sincere trust and affection.

A harbinger of the Red Cross when it was scarce known, her noble ministrations would inspire a worker in that field of merciful endeavor. Her patriotism as expressed in heroic allegiance to our flag and all that it stands for, and her high-hearted courage and selflessness in the midst of battle, foreshadowed the brave sacrifice of women in today's struggle for freedom.

She rarely spoke of her part in the rich experiences in the Orient, but General Foote felt that, although he alone held his Government's portfolio, his wife had been of almost equal service to the Nation they so devoutly loved.

Rose Foote went with her husband to Korea to be in the fullest sense his helpmate, and she has left to her country-women as a lasting inspiration the heritage of a lofty mission devotedly fulfilled.

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A DIPLOMAT'S HELPMATE

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Chapter I

GENERAL LUCIUS HARWOOD FOOTE IS APPOINTED FIRST UNITED STATES MINISTER AND ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY TO KOREA. DESPITE GOVERNMENT WARNINGS HIS WIFE DECIDES TO ACCOMPANY HIM. GREAT INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN THEIR DEPARTURE. GUESTS OF EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN AT TOKYO. MRS. FOOTE THE FIRST OCCIDENTAL WOMAN TO ENTER THE ANCIENT CAPITAL, SEOUL.

MRS. FOOTE was to go with her husband on his mission as first accredited United States Minister Plenipotentiary, and Envoy Extraordinary to Korea. Vainly Washington officialdom had sought to dissuade her. The State Department gravely warned her, that the errand on which General Foote was embarking might be fraught with unknown perils. She but steadfastly maintained her right to share these dangers, as she always had shared his good fortune or hardship. She was told that the powerful, conservative queen would use her utmost diplomatic skill to halt this invasion of the Land of the Morning Calm, where never an occidental woman had trod. The wife of the United States Embassador gently persisted that it was time for such prejudice to be demolished—that some woman would have to pave the way for an understanding between the daughters of the East and their sisters of the West, and so she calmly pursued her intention while the outraged autocratic potentate watched her from across the seas with bitter resentment. It was Her Majesty's first encounter with a woman of the Occident, and the sweet but strong-purposed American had won the opening long-distance skirmish, and unconscious of the disturbance she was creating in the Queen's circle, was serenely advancing to a closer meeting.

With deep concern our Government had looked about for the statesman to whom it could entrust the critical conditions that might arise, and after careful inspection of available material, decided upon General Lucius Harwood Foote of California. General Foote was a lawyer and an author of wide reputation, with military training and diplomatic experience, and to his handsome and dignified appearance, was added the delightful personality and charm of manner sure to impress the Orientals. The Hermit Kingdom had lately surprised the world by emerging from its shell and entering into the family of Nations, under the auspices of the United States, through which it first established intercourse with the Western World. Korea that had never maintained a strict independence had long been ostensibly under the suzerainty of China, much to the chagrin of her other neighbors. The breaking up of old conditions which would offer greater commercial and civil opportunities, could well provoke covetous adjacent countries to a dangerous attitude, the results of which might reach beyond the East. As the State Department seriously doubted that its representative would be allowed to reside within the walls of Seoul, no provision was made for a legation. The pitching of the Government's tent was to be left to his diplomatic skill. A matter that very directly concerned the Minister's happiness, was the conclusion of the President and the Secretary of State, that Mrs. Foote's going would be fraught with danger. The Exclusionists were belligerent and as antagonistic to foreigners as in the days when they massacred such offenders. The official admonition was further emphasized by the assertion that the powerful and attractive Korean Queen, who had strongly opposed the admission of the occidental man to the realm, would even more vindictively resent the coming of an Occidental of her own sex. Clever, and with unquestionable dominion at the

Court, she could make it at least very uncomfortable for the fair trespasser. Far from being intimidated by the threatening portraiture, and beyond any romantic fascination, the American woman felt for this determined character a strong personal concern.

There was an unusual bond of inter-dependence and delightful comradeship between the American man and wife, and despite some misgivings they preferred the danger risk to the test of separation.

The important fact that General Foote was going to the enigmatical kingdom, to straighten out any intricasies by personally guarding his nation's interests, attracted the attention of all international officials, with the result that other Western countries soon set about to follow the diplomatic action of the United States. The American Minister and his comrade would break the trail into the land just awakening from its sluggish condition of centuries and watch with immense interest at close range, this unique people in the recasting of its future. The formation period would doubtless be invested with the sauce of intrigue and the spice of danger.

There was promise for an Oriental drama full of action. But, as by her husband's side our California lady sailed away, she did not know of the part she would come to play under her flag in tragic scenes that would be enacted in the old walled capital. Nor did she dream that the queen, who at first had repudiated her, would confidently come to ask her saving help in a time of grave anxiety, and to trust her for solace after dear ones of her people had been beheaded.

The newly-appointed Minister's wife was accomplished and beautiful with a majestic bearing. Aside from her home instincts and social gifts she possessed a knowledge of the requirements of a diplomat's wife, so that she was in the highest sense, her husband's helpmeet. The Hermit

Kingdom, a land of wonder and mystery, had for this heroic woman a compelling enticement. It was as though she heard an impersonal call. Her best equipment as a preparedness for the adventure was a rich life which was the result of years of fruitful inner development, and such a life as would be ready to give itself to the highest duty that might be disclosed to her.

En route to their objective field, the distinguished Americans received much attention. At Tokyo, Japan, they dined with the Emperor and Empress, and fetes were given in their honor by their Majesties in the Palace domain.

General Foote soon engaged a Japanese gentleman as Korean interpreter, and a boy to serve him, and Mrs. Foote secured a competent Japanese maid.

At Yokohama, the U. S. ship,"Monocacy," was placed at the disposal of the U. S. Minister and on it, he and his wife concluded their journey.

At Chemulpo General Foote was met by a delegation of high dignitaries from the capital, stately men in elegant dress of the nobility. These polite representatives repressed their curiosity and with a surprising warmth of welcome and a frank spirit of kindliness not only for himself, but for his wife, mitigated the anxiety he was feeling about the adjustment of perplexing questions bound to confront him in his conferences with the government at the capital. No doubt his tact would be tested in the effort to secure the concession of maintaining the United States legation at Seoul, instead of its being delegated to Chemulpo. At the same time, the disposition of his wife would be considered—whether she would be permitted to take up residence directly with him, or even be allowed to dwell within easy communication. In the decision affecting Mrs. Foote, the Queen would doubtless hold the balance of power.

Meanwhile, the American lady was to remain on the "Monocacy."

The United States Minister bade his wife au revoir, then placed the American flag on his awaiting chair, and accompanied by the emissaries and some of the "Monocacy's" officers, set off for the capital. Under the gaze of thousands of natives, he made a memorable journey, where he was the first Western man to enter the Palace domain by the King's Gate.

The lady who had saluted the peculiar land with a characteristic enthusiasm, was glad to accompany some of the ship's officers in a stroll about Chemulpo. As soon as she put foot on the new soil, crowds of natives surrounded her, touched her, and stared into her eyes. Several dropped down, with faces upon the ground and curiously regarded her high-heeled shoes. So alarming became the demonstrations, that it was deemed advisable for the trespasser to return to the vessel. To Mrs. Foote it seemed as though through those inquiring souls the spirit of the entire land was but making its initial attempt to solve her and the meaning of her intrepidly coming through Korea's newly-opened gates.

At Seoul, the American Embassador negotiated some advantageous changes in the treaty, after which the ratification of the exchange of treaties took place.

And now, in addition to General Foote's state-craft, his fine courtesy and pleasing personality were potent factors in making it possible for him to take up official residence at the capital, nor were they less potent in convincing the protesting Korean Government that the United States Minister's wife's place was by her husband's side, and that she was not to be relegated even to the treaty port of Chemulpo, much less to Shanghai, China, as had been intimated. So wisely and tactfully had he gained his points, that before he left the city the leading

nobles vied with each other to do him honor, handsomely entertaining him at Korean and Chinese palaces, and further surprising and gratifying him with assurances of hospitable welcome for the lady of the United States Legation.

When the Minister returned for Mrs. Foote, the exciting news spread far and wide, and great was the curiosity to catch a glimpse of the stranger woman who had audaciously come, shattering the prejudices of ages.

The natives hastened from rice-fields and homes a hundred miles away and thousands lined the road as by her husband's side she rode forth in her chair, under the Stars and Stripes. The two, who with retinue were carried along over this pleasantly rolling flower-covered country, with its neighboring little farms and thatched huts, enjoyed every foot of the pictorial journey, now enlivened by surging masses of quaintly dressed natives. It roused the lady's imagination to the promise of rare scenes and adventures in the mysterious new world which they were entering.

The unique procession reached the high crenellated ivy-clad walls of the metropolis and passed within as the setting sun lit it up into a golden splendor, and the ancient bell rang sonorously announcing the closing of the sixteen gates. All about the newcomers the network of traffic surged and intermingled. Back and forth eddied torrents of jostling humanity—the oriental scenes of the picturesque multitude filling the strangers with amazement. Confused by the many tangled cries and noises, and the terrific rush of men and beasts, Mrs. Foote vividly felt that she was being engulfed in this weave and throb of the bewildering Far East life.

As they passed by the open shops and rows of low, thatched houses and zigzagged through the pushing throng, a train of patient bullocks burdened by loads of

Mrs. Rose F. Foote

brush piled high against the sky line—a veritable moving forest—parted to let them continue their way with the United States banner asserting its notes of red, white and blue. The wonder and inquisitiveness of the near populace manifested itself in persistent efforts to gaze upon the foreign man and woman. The agitation of the two hundred thousand inhabitants intensified the deep thrill of excitement experienced by the Minister's wife and added a distinctive keenness to the close of her wonderful pilgrimage.

When the party reached the objective point, a breeze stirred, and something humanly caressing brushed across the lady's cheek. It was the dear flag. She caught the end of it, and put it to her lips where it seemed to pulse softly as if to remind her of its faithful presence and purpose. The General was touched by the incident and tenderly lifted her from her chair.

News of the marvelous happenings of this day, was quickly carried to the Palace. The baffled Queen in a fury of rage beat upon her imprisoning walls, as she smarted under the taunting realization that the uncrowned occidental woman commanded a limitless freedom in her interference with the traditions that had been dearest to the Korean heart. The indignity had been insupportable when the intruder had entered the treaty port, but now that the very gates of the protecting walls of the sacred capital had opened for her, this near approach to the royal domain was resented with increased anger.

Mrs. Foote had achieved distinction as a pathfinder. Being the first occidental woman to enter ancient Seoul she had paved the way for others of her sex to follow.

Chapter II

LOOKING FOR LEGATION AND HOME QUARTERS. "CHUNG-DONG," AN OLD MIN PALACE, CHOSEN. MRS. FOOTE UNFURLS THE AMERICAN FLAG OVER THE LEGATION. PROPHETIC TEARS.

AMONG the properties inspected for a United States legation purpose was an ancient Min palace. It asserted a claim of distinct associations, having been the abode of one of the Queen's powerful family. It recorded a most fascinating history and was invested with the flavor of romance. There was a proud, surviving interest in the gruesome tales of its valiant decapitated Mins, who even now in unquestionable shape, periodically stalked about the premises. These stories, orally transmitted, had the seal of actuality put upon them by the ineffaceable attesting blood-stains on the walls, and were further corroborated by gloomy recitals that skulls and headless skeletons which had missed honorable burial, had been turned up in the gardens. The Minister found that it could be made to suit his official requirements while with his wife he was not unmindful of the romantic enchantment it offered as a home. He hastened to buy it with his personal funds. His government readily approved his action, with the intent of re-imbursing him and taking the property over.

"Chung-Dong," the name of this estate, signified "Beautiful Mount," and was on a rise that later became known as "Legation Hill." Its acres of grounds were well wooded with stretches of neglected greenswards, and offered opportunity for floral culture. There were seven principal houses, besides servants' quarters and outhouses.

Japanese artists selected and brought over appropriate

furniture, and after many alterations "Chung-Dong" was converted into a beautiful governmental home, offering an unusual attraction. With artistic appreciation of its ancient beauties, Mrs. Foote had stayed the hand of the iconoclast and insisted upon retaining all of the rich oriental architectural details within and without, especially treasuring the massive dark beams and rafters of the Legation offices and drawing-rooms. Richly embroidered screens and hangings, costly vases, lion, tiger and leopard skins, potted plants and brilliant growing flowers were graciously sent from palaces, to contribute bright color and impart cheer. This delightful amenity reminded the stranger lady to bring out a bag containing home flower seeds which she duly planted with her own hands. In time they joyfully justified her care, and often became her distinctive messengers to royal friends.

Infatuated with oriental art, Mrs. Foote began to secure a collection of rare and beautiful treasures, among them pieces of precious Satsuma ware, old lanterns, Mandarin coats, ancient embroideries and many quaint specimens of long-forgotten crafts.

This welcome hospitable refuge with its distinct Eastern bewitchment, would not have been complete without the dependable Chinese steward who had a Chesterfield manner and a valuable administrative ability in the orderly management of the large corps of native servants. Tall and handsomely dressed in a blue brocaded silk gown reaching to his ankles, his carefully kept queue hanging down his straight back, he was an adornment whenever he moved or wherever he posed. There was always a big company of sparrows on the premises, and they and the colonies of chattering magpies scared the venturesome but harmless fat snakes back into the seclusion of comfortable quarters up among the tiles in the roofs. No native would

harm or hinder any of these "humble, crawling brothers," in their patient evolution.

A tall flagpole was secured from a far-off forest and floated down the river. When it reached the city and was borne through the twists and bends of the narrow streets, as if demanding an unobstructed right of way, it knocked down several little houses, for which damage generous remuneration was promptly made. The staff was placed in the principal courtyard of the Legation, and in the presence of many dignitaries, Mrs. Foote, at the bidding of her husband, unfurled the American flag, tears, perhaps prophetic, filling her eyes as she realized as never before, what this precious symbol meant for their protection. It waved majestically in the breeze, then dipped down as if it would gather its folds about her.

The American lady at once commanded a prominent place in oriental diplomatic life. Her exceptional beauty and queenly bearing aroused admiration wherever she was seen. And this physical charm was but an outward expression of a universality of spirit and a warm sympathy that soon won the hearts of the gentle Koreans.

Later on, other legations with delightful inmates were instituted.

Soon after General Foote's settlement at Seoul, and largely through his suggestion, the King dispatched to the United States a special embassy consisting of two Koreans of high rank and a suitable suite. The party journeyed on the United States ship "Trenton." They were received at the United State capital and by the American people in general with great courtesy. These eager men were quickened to seize every opportunity for the study of progressive methods.

Since the opening of the Hermit Kingdom, a number of ambitious young Korean nobles had gone over to Japan with the earnest purpose of studying and broadening their

civic and military education. They, too, had returned with an increased thirst for freedom. Such aspiring, daring characters, polite and refined, and of a pleasing personality, became accustomed to gather at the American home, where they profited by Western inspiration. The hostess radiated a quality which ripened and enriched those hungry minds as they eagerly plied her with questions and listened to her graphic responses concerning her country, its admirable institutions and its noble men and women. Those ardent students who had awakened to a national self-consciousness readily responded to the stimulus of occidental ideas that gave them increased courage to pursue their ideals. But representatives of all parties were impartially, cordially welcomed at the Legation and a sympathy was felt with those who could not see beyond the race-habit of self-interest and satisfaction by the employment of old methods.

While fully enjoying their Korean life, General and Mrs. Foote realized that they were in an atmosphere of danger, that might come to be expressed in a coup d'etat. The three parties, the Exclusionists, the Conservatives and the Liberals were constantly clashing, and their menacing domestic broils were sources of anxious conjecture. With any serious outbreak was the possibility of some other country's interfering. Korea had been the Naboth's Vineyard of the Far East and Japan and Russia continued to nurse their resentment of China's imperious presumption to which claim the dominating Queen had always subscribed. With the Court, foreign affairs ever had been a particularly favorable sphere for intrigue, sometimes resulting in the violent and even barbarously achieved overthrow of ministries. And such wild conflicts could occur again.

Of all the attractions of that land none so strongly stirred Mrs. Foote as that of the conservative Queen who

had been doubly aggravated by the United States Minister's planting his flag and taking up family residence within the long-prohibited capital walls far across the city, yet too insolently near her palace gates. The Queen, known as Queen Min, was the highest representative of the ancient powerful Min family, whose blood was said to be in great part Chinese. This family had the largest number of nobles, with the greatest landed estates of all the families of nobility in Korea. Her Majesty was a strong and formidable character, brilliant and magnetic, and was regarded as the brainiest woman of the entire Orient. She was an uncompromising Conservative, a fearless leader, and was the power behind the throne although it was believed that the King, who deeply loved her, secretly favored the Liberal Party. Besides being a profound Confucian student, she was versed in government affairs and was a prominent factor in every Korean political crisis. The Min clan lived on social terms with the Court of China, and the Queen, who shared with the ladies of the royal Chinese household the love of beautiful clothes, secured selections of the most richly gorgeous garments procurable from the looms and the embroidery experts of Peking—that Paris of far Cathay.

To the United States Minister it looked as if his wife were barred from meeting this marvelous creature who seemed to have immutable laws of her own, which she now exercised in undauntedly defying the accepted ethics of diplomacy by determinedly ignoring the claim of courtesy due the wife of the first accredited western Embassador at the Korean Court.

The American woman felt urgently drawn to this fearless, defiant power and never abandoned the hope of meeting her. In considering the potent influences that had shaped such a character and determined the direction of its activities, one could not wonder at the loyal

Conservative's bitter distrust of the Westerner. Of the remembrance of unforgivable insults offered Korea by foreign trespassers, among whom it was asserted were Americans, was the ruthless desecrations of the sacred tombs of the ancient kings in a mad search for gold, priceless vases and other invaluable treasures. Mrs. Foote could not withhold a sympathetic appreciation of the Queen's attitude in her fierce resentment of such a sacrilege where ancestral worship was a revered, sacred rite.

The desire to know this determined figure had a purpose beyond curiosity or any personal aim. She believed the dynamic power of an intellect so loyal to its convictions, with such an enormous capacity for evil accredited to it, might be diverted from its devotion to the justification of intrigue and cruelty by transmission into a corresponding force for the good of her race. But she could wait. Meanwhile this unique people so appealed to her enthusiastic interest that Mrs. Foote often climbed a ladder and looked down over the outer wall to study the spirit and the local color of the busy panorama in the crowded streets. The hard, primitive methods of the men and women at work, the hungry children, the squalid poverty and misery enlisted her serious attention.

Thus at her very door she discovered a field for the exercise of a tender and purposeful philanthropy. Taking her thirty servants and a number of other receptive natives she experienced a great joy in giving a portion of her time to teaching them practical lessons while elevating them spiritually. Nor did she fail to generously and continuously provide money, fuel, food and various comforts for the wretchedly poor all about Legation Hill, while she ministered to the sick and was known even to dress their wounds. In her interest the lady found that Æsop's Fables appealed to the oriental mind and she was glad of her knowledge of them. Among the acts never forgotten by

the humble people, was that in the case of a youth of the American home who was asphyxiated in the heating quarters. He was discovered by fellow-servants who confidently ran for their good friend. She came quickly and, with ready wit, inserted a tube in the boy's mouth, then perserveringly blew her own breath into his lungs till life was restored. This story, and many others that showed the large-heartedness of the stranger, was widely circulated, and did not fail to reach the royal realm where the agitating gossip particularly fascinated the women directly serving Her Majesty. Their quarters reverberated with an excitement that invested those monotonous, colorless lives with a new vitality. Even more arousing and mysterious were the tales of the foreign woman's influence on the young Korean nobles who gathered about her in the drawing-room of the United States Legation, and who always came away with clarified visions, and their ideals freshly aglow. But the self-sufficient Queen, who, if the necessity arose, might inspire fear and inaugurate revolution, direct beheadings and sway destinies, would not appear to compromise her dignity by listening to the enthusiastic chatter. However, she really had heard every word of the enticing gossip with grave concern and had pondered the disturbing innovation till curiosity and jealousy inflamed to such a point that a deep desire surged in her to probe the secret of the interloper's magic sway.

The disturbing news had all been brought to the palace by men, and the astute Sovereign misdoubted masculine ability to gauge the eternal feminine whether of native or foreign extraction. She herself would never deign to look upon the objectionable woman, not even by cautiously peeping through a screen hole, but by some resourceful method she would learn of her through the discriminating eyes and the analytical brains of trustworthy members of her own sex. This change of front was followed by a

careful reconnaissance of the situation with the result that she set about and devised an arrangement whereby a number of her Ladies in Waiting were to call upon the United States Minister's lady and convey to her greetings from the Queen of Korea.

The King could not disguise his evident delight in seeing Her Majesty make this change of attitude toward the American lady, and the United States Minister and his wife were deeply impressed. The stir of preparation for the important errand and the consequent whir of excitement was felt by every denizen of the royal estate. Indeed, the first news of the astounding decision of their domain's autocrat almost paralyzed the palace's human mechanism. But when the amazing fact was comprehended, the wheels went spinning again as if every creature in the grounds were a factor to the visit's success.

Chapter III

THE CONSERVATIVE QUEEN SENDS HER LADIES IN WAITING TO CALL UPON THE LADY OF THE AMERICAN LEGATION. SHE DECIDES TO SEE THE OCCIDENTAL WOMAN. MRS. FOOTE PRESENTED AT THE KOREAN COURT. THE QUEEN'S ATTITUDE SOFTENS TOWARD HER GUEST.

At the appointed hour for the deputation to set out each of the favored court ladies in resplendent attire entered her individual conveyance. With a series of guards on either side of them, the noble women ventured into the wider country giving touches of bright color and an air of festivity to the drab streets as they proceeded on their romantic errand of exploration, while throngs of men, women and children bordered their way and reveled in the joy of such near approach to dwellers of the Palace.

When the United States Legation was reached, these gay butterflies emerged from their little coaches, and lit upon the greensward. It was a transition to a new world. High above them floated the beautiful red, white and blue banner of which they had heard. Awesomely looking up, they wondered at the mystery of the American woman's interest in the sacred ceremony of its unfolding, and were at a loss to comprehend how a mere perishable bit of gay bunting could exercise such a far-reaching, compelling power.

It was with anxiety and trembling that the dainty creatures met the United States Minister's lady. Although awed by her stately presence, through the intrepreter, their important message of welcome was timidly delivered. The sweet graciousness of Mrs. Foote's reply at once

relieved the strain and gave them courage to talk more freely.

The hostess pleased them by warm expressions of high regard for their Queen, in which they were assured that all her country women cordially joined. To this were added words of appreciation of Her Majesty's thought for her, a lone woman far from home and kindred, and personal thanks to her guests, the bearers of the courtesy. Then with the engaging simplicity of the normal American, she showed them about the drawing-rooms eliciting great interest and enjoyment.

Under the spell of her conquering goodness, the visitors made their adieux and returned to their august mistress who had been pacing her private halls in feverish anticipation. Although fearful of the royal wrath, the envoys could not restrain exuberant expressions over the adventure. By their uncontrolled gaiety and daring, the exalted listener felt that these subjugated creatures of her will had profited by contact with the strength of a great character, and, by an infection of freedom were exultantly drinking at a new fountain of life. It sounded an alarm. She pondered with chagrin the alluring problem. Then after considering it for days, to her amazement, in some shadowy corner of her woman's consciousness, resentment slowly gave way to a more generous prompting. Despite her inborn prejudices and conservatism, the great Korean's powerful intellect began to perceive the possibility that the interesting intruder with her deep insight and far-reaching influence, instead of being a menace might indeed be of service to her in her isolated perilous life as a queen. Spurred by this subtle, disquieting suggestion, she with the executive force that made her an oriental power, determined to sweep aside the barriers which she had cherished, as ruthlessly as she would sweep away any outside

opposition, and to set herself free to judge the occidental woman for herself.

As a result of this revolutionary determination, the United States Minister's wife to her great delight learned that she was to have an audience with the Queen.

The startling news that the invincible Power had come to recede from her formidable attitude produced intense excitement at the United States Legation.

On the appointed day, Her Majesty dispatched for the honored guest her most elegant palanquin of fine wood, gold lacquered, and inset with beautiful colored stones. A gold Confucian cross was at each upper corner. Its windows were of old Chinese hand-painted glass, exquisite, beflowered bits of historic art. The inside was richly paneled and cushioned with layers of gold brocade. It was like a great jewel case and held a fragrance like that of a rose jar. Relays of royal chair-bearers were to carry her, and the King sent his guard as an escort.

For the impressive occasion, Mrs. Foote who was expected to appear in Court-presentation costume, wore a rich gown embellished with rare laces. Although the entire front of the palanquin was raised, she found difficulty in stowing away her dress without seriously crushing the precious train. The General merrily watched her attempts to make a nest. Both were always awake to the fun of a situation, and the wife quickly catching her husband's mischievous eye, said, pausing in the struggle to accommodate Western breadth as expressed in dress to Eastern restriction as expressed in conveyances, "Lucius, wouldn't it be an awful beginning if I were forced to back out?"

Laughing heartily, he replied, "That would not be like you, my dear Rose. Rather, diligently, and at any cost, back in." Thereupon, aided by her eager little maid she redoubled her efforts and soon had the refractory costume

adjusted to the given space and settled herself upon the fragrant cushion, her gay train fluted about her like a peacock's spread tail. Her husband looked on with twinkling and admiring eyes as with the Interpreter and Japanese maid she in high-wrought expectancy set off to meet the greatest Queen of far Cathay. The United States Minister gazed after her musing upon the feminine psychology that eluded his skill. While wondering at the ways of the masterful Korean woman, he found it beyond his diplomatic vision to conjecture what this unexpected change of policy might mean in the play of the future.

Thousands thronged the ancient streets to get a glimpse of the stranger hidden behind the drawn embroidered curtains of her chair with no opening left but a tiny peephole. Many adroitly crept under the palanquin and had to be dragged out and beaten off.

The palace grounds embraced 3000 acres with summer and winter palaces and thousands of persons lived there in attendance upon the royal family.

When the honored guest reached the royal gate, as if by a magic wand it opened, and passing the guards, she entered an enchanted land that no occidental woman had ever dreamed of. She felt like a bird on wings as she was hurried along through many beautiful gateways, into parks with kaleidoscopic scenes till she reached the reception hall, and entered the ante-chamber. Beyond was the room where the King and Queen sat upon the throne, with the young Prince standing by their side. Mrs. Foote with lifted head and stately grace, moved forward making the prescribed consecutive salutations, till she paused before the august pair who had arisen from the throne and stood as she approached. They were in magnificent robes of state. The King was attired in a long touramachi or coat of rich red silk—the royal color. Her Majesty wore a long, flowing blue silk skirt, with a yellow silk chogerie or jacket

exquisitely embroidered and fastened with amber and pearl buttons. Her raven-black hair was drawn smoothly away from the interesting face and effectively coiled in a wheel at the back of the neck. This wheel was ornamented with jewels set in elaborated gold filigree. Far from being startling the entire costume while orientally attractive was harmonious and in perfect taste. An elegant jewelled ornament indicating her royalty was set upon her well-shaped head. At her side hung a number of gold filigree jewelled ornaments with long, gay, silk tassels.

When the two women faced each other there was a pause. Each one seemed seriously measuring the other. The stranger's majestic yet gentle presence filled the august Korean couple with silent surprise and respect and to Mrs. Foote, the Queen with her masterful poise and searching eyes did not need the badge of office to confirm her wield of power. After this momentary tarrying, the honored American was received with the elaborate oriental court etiquette of centuries. The King, Queen and Prince each in turn made a speech of welcome and the United States Minister's lady responded with an unexpected sweet graciousness that Her Highness was quick to understand and that to her own surprise changed her formal attitude into a carefully guarded approach to geniality.

This auspicious interview evidently led her to conclude that her Ladies in Waiting were not far mistaken in their enthusiasm over the stranger.

And here was the beginning of an acquaintance that through tragic circumstances came to ripen into a sincere attachment.

Mrs. Foote's presentation at court had left a psychological impress. Her Majesty, whose jealousy and hostility had been much mitigated by the late interview, could not rid herself of a recurring desire to come into closer contact with the newcomer—in fact to know her. She felt that

something persuasive and subtle was challenging her to further encounter. She would like an opportunity to study this type of fearless untrammelled occidental womanhood that by no humanly-conferred power was exercising an effectual queenhood in her Korean realm, such as she, sovereign by law, had never been able to secure by her inflexible methods. After much puzzling of brain the resourceful sovereign conceived an innovation in the rule of royal functions that would cause all the country to wonder. The design was to give a Fete Champetre in the palace grounds in honor of the lady of the United States Minister, for which provision would be made with a munificence beyond that of any like attention ever offered in the Far East. By imperial command the entire royal estate with its marvelous attractions was to be put in immaculate order and the genius of its various artists taxed to their utmost. In its wonderful stage setting, the most fascinating oriental entertainments would be offered on a scale of magnificence transcending all previous events.

Chapter IV

THE QUEEN GIVES A WONDERFUL FETE CHAMPETRE IN HONOR OF THE LADY OF THE AMERICAN LEGATION. THE BEAUTIFUL PALACE DOMAIN AND UNIQUE ORIENTAL ENTERTAINMENTS.

WHEN apprised of the great courtesy, the honored lady received it with an exultant pride, which was quickly followed by a characteristic self-less humility. Naturally her first impulse was one of joy at the implied victory she had won, but that impulse of pardonable pride vanished in her exultation over this hopeful sign that she should be the instrument to light woman's way in Korea. Even now Western women missionaries were making the venture. It was as an answer to her prayers that the United States Minister's wife had regarded the innovation of her late reception at the Court where she was allowed freely to converse with the Power whose displeasure against her had been so determined. The general belief prevailed that diplomatic ethics having been regarded and the Queen's curiosity having been satisfied, her chapter with the Imperious One was forever closed. But Mrs. Foote intuitively felt that this was not true.

Shaken by the importance of the extraordinary attention, the American Legation from high to low indulged in unrestricted expressions of gratification. Even the General, aroused to an unaccustomed enthusiasm, declared that his wife must have exercised some art of diplomacy, the code of which only the female could decipher, else such unparalleled fortune was the result of her possessing a hidden Aladdin's lamp whereby she might tamper with the magic of the East.

Again the royal palanquin and the King's Guard were at Mrs. Foote's disposal, as they were at her subsequent visits to the palace. So great was the demonstration all along the route that severe means were required to clear the way. Crowds stood watching the great palace gate as it opened and revealed to her sight two hundred tall eunuchs in plain rich uniform who lined the way beyond and emphasized the gorgeous color effects. She was borne through Eden-like groves in which apricot and plum trees, palms and cherry bushes greeted her wondering eyes. Delicate flowers bordered the paths and perfumed the air; crysanthemums and other sumptuous blooms banked the sunny hillsides and here and there were long carpets of tender greensward. Onward she was gently carried, past towering red and gold lacquered pagodas and pavilions richly tiled in emphatic hues. Fairy tea houses were perched on vine-clad cliffs and miniature temples rose up on isles, the bright fluted green and gold roofs and surrounding plants reflected in the clear waters of the lakes. From the distance floated music from stringed instruments that with the accompaniment of the clash of tom-toms and gongs sometimes rose to martial strains. Birds of gay plumage flew among the tree tops like flashing jewels, but the crowning decorative motifs were the Court Ladies and hundreds of other dames of high degree who were scattered over the lawns, effectively displaying marvelous creations of the oriental costumer. Translated to a new-found world the American was so abandoning herself to its enchantment that she was barely aroused from the lure of a lotus dream when the palace was reached.

She was graciously received by the King and Queen and with less punctilious ceremony than that exercised at the first presentation. Her Majesty wore a robe of fabulous price, its rich material and embroideries enhanced by

rare pearls. Her picturesque and now mellowed personality impressed itself vividly upon Mrs. Foote.

The august hostess made a new and daring departure by engaging in the festivities and exhibiting much enjoyment of the stranger upon whom the Court Ladies were in constant attendance. The latter, ingenuous little creatures, were piqued with intense curiosity. A few, encouraged by the guest's re-assuring manner, pointed to her long white kid gloves whereupon she skinned them off, while they apprehensively looked to see the epidermis go as well. The women then passed them around and merrily hid their own baby-like hands within their depths. Mrs. Foote's white arms and hands were gently examined as were her diamond ornaments. They wondered how she could manage such a load of uncomfortable sumptuous apparel and submit to having her waist boxed up, while their curiosity was eager to learn where she procured the cosmetics that made her so fair. It was all very confiding and child-like. The autocrat of the Court looked on with interest and when eagerly listening to the talk was closely studying the Westerner, who while she fascinated, baffled her analysis and filled her with increased wonderment. As she followed the conversation and the rapid exchanges of ideas by the feminine international code of gesticulation, she found all lingering antagonism vanishing and her spirit quickening to an undefinable yearning. Did she begin to question if it were not a reaching out for something that could be disclosed only to one who is not too hampered by, and dependent upon, the things of sense? She had been feeling her way, warily guarding against too intimate a concession, but persuaded by the sincerity of the gentle Westerner, she threw down the barriers of restraint and heartily entered into the exchange of happy thoughts. As she did so, her face was transfigured into a positive beauty. Mrs. Foote was delighted as the Queen revealed

the knowledge, intelligence and wit of a well-stored mind, and she soon discovered in the much misrepresented, misunderstood royal hostess, assurances of a lofty, generous soul.

The joyous guest was escorted from place to place to unique entertainments. Music stole down from musicians seated in pagodas. On the bank of a lake a large lotus bud opened, disclosing a nude babe that was received into the welcoming arms of an awaiting mother. A sail boat upon a lake carried a number of flower-like girls who danced upon the deck, their rhythmic motions and beautiful poses illustrating an historical story. And various admirable little plays were enacted, appealing so lucidly to the imagination that no interpreter was needed. Funny little acrobats stood on their heads and hung among the tree branches. Between times Oriental refreshments were served at Wistaria-enwreathed tea houses on islands in the center of lakes whose waters were covered with lotus blossoms and spanned by red lacquered and stone bridges.

For romantic magnificence and bewildering beauty, the Fete surpassed anything of a festive character that had ever been presented in the Land of the Morning Calm.

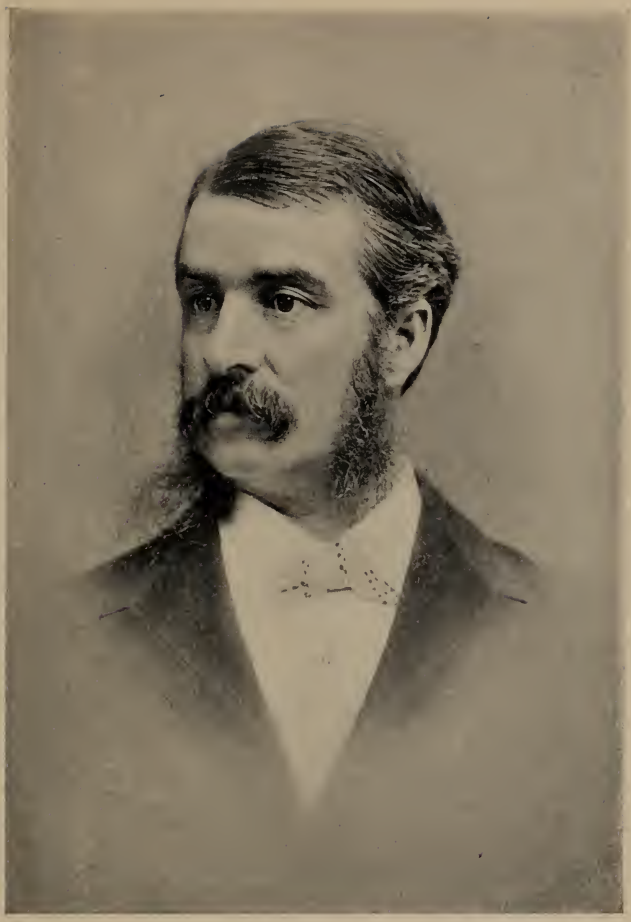
As Mrs. Foote was about to depart, the Queen with radiant face expressed a hope that she would soon see her again and assured her that the entertainment was intended as a tribute and not merely as a ceremonial. And our conquering unofficial diplomat went home in glowing wonder over this budding friendship.

Chapter V

SIGNAL OF PEOPLE'S UPRISING SOUNDS AT STATE BANQUET. GENERAL FOOTE RESCUES WOUNDED COURT FAVORITE. KING URGES GENERAL AND MRS. FOOTE TO SEEK SAFETY AT PALACE, BUT UNITED STATES MINISTER AND WIFE REMAIN UNDER THEIR FLAG. THE CITY ABLAZE WITH REVOLT. THE PEOPLE'S GRATITUDE SAVES AMERICAN LEGATION FROM DESTRUCTION. FOREIGN RESIDENTS HURRY AWAY TO TREATY PORT. FOREIGN EMBASSADORS CALLED TO CHEMULPO. MRS. FOOTE REMAINS ALONE IN THE CAPITAL AT ROYAL REQUEST. HER LONG VIGIL WITH THE FLAG HER COMRADE.

But political trouble was brewing. It was significant that China had a large number of troops within the walls of the city and displayed an amount of impressive military paraphernalia and Japan kept a complement of soldiers in readiness, in case any need arose for the protection of their new legation buildings.

The impending crash came finally, in the way of an awful surprise. It was on December 4, 1884, at an elaborate banquet given by a recent Korean embassador to the United States. The dominant figure among the natives present was the handsome Prince Min Yong Ik, one of the late embassadors to the United States. Only a few years before, after a harrowing experience in a revolt, he had shaved his head and, as a Buddhist Priest, fled for safety to another country, while his cousin, the Queen, who had exchanged clothes with a servant escaped and her substitute was slain. Thereafter her Majesty returned in triumph and established a cabinet of her own making. The Prince was a Conservative, and the Court favorite, with an immense fortune, and with a standing next to that



General Lucius Harwood Foote

of the King. All countries were represented at the feast and the oriental nobles were especially elaborately costumed in gorgeously dyed robes. Suddenly there was an alarm of fire. It was a signal understood by certain of the guests, and they instantly arose. Like an electric flash came the realization to the unsuspecting that a plot was being hatched, and in consternation, they, too, jumped to their feet. Prince Min Yong Ik, who was no novice to such a dramatic demonstration was quick to comprehend the subtle significance of the fire-call and the danger to himself, and rushed out into the Court-yard, only to be set upon by conspirators and fearfully gashed. He staggered back into the hall, a ghastly sight with seven sword-cuts in his head, body arteries severed and the flesh of his carven cheek hanging down. Thereupon the Orientals excitedly tore off their brilliant outer garments and jewelled girdles, revealing a simple dress and in a twinkling all the Liberals headed by the arch-conspirator, Kim Ok Kuin, rushed to the gates, or scampered over the walls and vanished. General Foote had sprung forward to catch the wounded and almost dying Prince in his arms, and of the guests he alone remained. Still holding the stricken man, he quickly gave orders to the demoralized attendants, and in a brief time had the Prince placed in the care of Dr. Allen, a skillful, American surgeon who had lately entered the country.

He then made for the Legation through the dismal old streets, crunching over the snow, occasionally seeing a twinkling light from a little house, and while meeting but one man, an officer on duty, was confronted here and there by a lone ghost-like, closely veiled woman in white finding her way to her hut by aid of a tiny lamp with its beeswax taper.

The American Minister reached home in such a sad plight as to alarm the servants. Absorbed in the horror

of the scene, he had not perceived that his clothes were soaked and dripping with the Prince's blood. Mrs. Foote, hurrying to greet him was overwhelmed, for she instantly imagined that an attempt had been made to assassinate him and that he had staggered home to die. He quieted her fears.

But soon there was added consternation throughout the Legation, for it became known that a messenger had come in haste bringing the King's Guard, and was awaiting audience. He bore an earnest request from His Majesty that the United States Minister and his wife should come at once to the Palace for safety. General Foote politely replied that he would remain under his flag and Mrs. Foote refused the proffered rescue declaring that she would stay with her husband. Although both comprehended that the rioting Korean mob would have scant comprehension of a foreign embassy's right to inviolability in internecine disturbance, yet they knew that it was their duty to maintain and establish that standard of neutral immunity, at whatever cost to themselves. It was a part of the heroic work of the occidental diplomatic pathfinder.

There was noise and commotion throughout the city, but the night wore itself away and the next day with its complications of duty, was a busy and a trying one for the American representative whose valued suggestions in the grave conferences were characterized by a supreme tact that met the exigencies of the delicate situation.

Then a night of terror set in and the United States Minister and his wife stood confronting the horrors of an oriental revolution.

The Japanese Minister had gone to the Palace upon invitation of the King, it was asserted, and the Japanese soldiers had formed a cordon around the Palace walls. The Liberals had then rushed to the Palace and quickly accomplished their purpose. Surrounding the King they

had deposed and cut off the heads of the members of his Cabinet who were the Queen's appointees, and installed men of their own party. The Queen, herself, in a state of horror and anguish, hid away but momentarily expected to be dragged out and assassinated. The fierce battle in the palace grounds left pools of blood, and during the conflict bullets whizzed over the United States Legation, producing intense excitement. The valuable and favorite dog in the American home added to the turmoil by crouching and whining then going dangerously mad. He was ordered to be shot in spite of Mrs. Foote's grief and entreaties. The Legation was put under martial law. Luckily the winter's supply of provisions had been secured.

The American woman's thoughts went out anxiously to the Queen who with the King had so quickly proffered her and her husband refuge from impending danger and who herself was now imperiled and powerless in the midst of that carnage. Perhaps she was awfully tortured—perhaps slain in the bloody arena. If alive maybe she would see the flag and divine its message and take courage. Never had the Minister and his wife so felt the potency of their national symbol.

However the ascendency of the Liberals was short-lived. The Conservatives realizing that submission to this defeat would be a death-blow to their power, rallied with a desperate courage, and, largely reinforced by Chinese troops under Yuan Shi Kai, they stormed the palace stronghold, drove the daring new usurpers to cover, regained control of the Government, brought the suffering but undaunted Queen from her place of concealment and re-established the King.

Upon this amazing turn of affairs, the Japanese Guard and officials in quick haste secured the state papers from their Legation building, hastily gathered together many refugee Japanese men, women and children who had

congregated at the embassy and protected by their soldiers they as a desperate party perilously rushed through the streets, hurled themselves against the Western Gate, beat it down and fled to Chemulpo. It was a daring heroic dash. Many were killed and many of the wounded fell in the city streets, where they died and their bodies remained till devoured by the dogs.

The new Japanese Legation buildings and the town palaces of the Liberals all over the Capital went up in flame, reddening the entire sky. The hostile bands had broken into the arsenal, and together with the entire native population had turned the city into a pandemonium. The Japanese as sympathizers of the Liberals were in dire straits as the mob's particular objects of vengeance. Their blood was running in the streets. Every Legation flag, except the Stars and Stripes was hauled down, and the inmates of the British Legation came to that of the United States. During the nine days of trouble, the American flag was the only foreign banner that waved and floated from the beginning continuously, beckoning the oppressed to its haven, despite the fact that such an invitation was risking, even inviting attack. Those of the persecuted who could, fled to the refuge, and Minister Foote gave orders to open the gates to all such who came.

More than once, the United States buildings were on the verge of destruction. In anticipation of the storming of the Legation, the state papers were secured and all was made ready for the almost hopeless attempt to escape. A hollow square was to be formed, and Mrs. Foote in her chair, with the state papers was to be placed in the center. Then a courageous sortie was to be tried in an effort to make way through the turbulent streets, confronting terrors, force a city gate and flee to the treaty port. The Minister's wife faced this prospect as she had all the fearful experiences, with a composed strong heart. She lost

thought of herself in her continued personal attention to the rescued and still imperiled men, women and children. Typical of the numerous perplexing and trying difficulties which her masterly tact was called upon to adjust was that of a rescued Mohammedan woman with her ingrained prejudices. She refused to eat the proffered food or even use the dishes and cooking utensils, and she had a hungry, crying baby. Mrs. Foote as the good angel came to the relief and smoothed over the situation so wisely that mother and child were agreeably and bountifully fed.

It was by no mere chance that the American Legation survived the heroic part it played in this dire drama. Not only was the American Minister honored and admired by the court and the native populace, but his noble wife was revered by the whole city, from queen to lowliest peasant. Thousands knew personally of her charities and gracious acts of kindness. Again and again, some fierce spirits would have applied the torch to the ancient palace over which the Stars and Stripes undauntedly beckoned to the imperiled. But always at the highest danger point, the attempt to destroy the place was frustrated by grateful natives springing forward with vehement reminders of the benefactions of these high-minded foreigners who were from the country to which Korea first confided her trust.

Beyond all else, it was their preparedness in personal qualities, which fortified and preserved the American and his wife and enabled them to be protectors to all those who sought safety under the star-lit banner.

After a time of threatening and wearing uncertainty, the sounds of riot and destruction died away to distant mutterings. But while the old capital seemed stunned to quiet by the horror of the late experience, fears were felt that the smouldering fires might rekindle.

Immediately upon the abatement of hostilities, the United States Minister demanded that the Japanese, who

had been sheltered by his Legation, be taken to Chemulpo with a guard and this was speedily done.

All the foreign residents of Seoul now took occasion to break camp and hurry away to the treaty port. As Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the United States Minister prepared to go to Chemulpo to confer with Count Inouye, the Japanese Minister of Foreign affairs, who accredited as special Embassador, had arrived there. To further add to the gravity of the situation word came of the landing and encampment of several thousand Japanese troops, and this news further stirred the capital. Mrs. Foote was to accompany her husband.

Suddenly in the night before the intended departure, a messenger came in haste from the palace. What did it portend? General Foote went out to learn, and his wife, alarmed, quickly followed. She heard her name mentioned. The King and Queen had sent to ask if Mrs. Foote would consent to remain at the capital. It was their Majesties' urgent appeal. The anxious rulers feared that, in the impending departure of all foreigners, the rebellious might find excuse for entirely throwing off restraint and renew more fiercely than ever, the atrocities of the past days. It was the conviction of both King and Queen that the one being in Seoul who could hold the people's confidence was Mrs. Foote. They urged through their messenger that public knowledge that this beloved foreign friend of all, remained quietly and confidently in her legation-home under her flag would reassure the demoralized and keep in check the violent.

The Minister was profoundly affected by this magnificent tribute to his wife but, while he would have gladly risked any personal danger to be of aid, he could not allow his wife to be exposed to the perils of such a heroic situation, and he spoke for her and emphatically refused. But Mrs. Foote was never known to turn away from an appeal

for help, and now, that from so high a source confidence was expressed in her ability to be of service in such a crucial time, there could be but one response. She might avert further bloodshed. Her duty was plain and she so expressed herself and her husband, moved by the characteristic attitude of self-sacrifice, finally reluctantly consented to the royal plea, but not until he had demanded and been promised that a joint Korean and Chinese guard come and surround "Chung-Dong."

It was a trying day when the courageous woman saw her husband depart and realized that the Legation gates were closed and locked and that she, a lone occidental woman, was left in the ancient city. By climbing a ladder to the top of the outer legation wall, she might see a section of the encircling oriental army that was to protect her from the possible fury of a host of other Orientals whose thirst for blood was perhaps not yet satisfied.

The succeeding long hours of apprehension were as years. Sometimes she was startled by a report of an uprising, and every unusual noise caused her heart to jump. One less strongly equipped might have fancied that at night the ghosts of the long-ago valiant decapitated Mins of "Chung-Dong" were rising up in sympathy with the uneasy, struggling survivors of their proud house, and stalking about the corridors.

Even the usually attractive lighting of the afternoon signal-fires to gleam like loads of jewels on the far-off mountain facing the palace could now have an ominous significance, as even the powerful "ding-dong" of the great city bell, which was a distinct feature in the capital, might voice a terrorizing warning.

This immense huge-toned object was hung in a pagoda in the center of the metropolis. The funereal tolling of it was accompanied by a weird refrain—not unlike that of bagpipes—and was rendered by musicians placed in the

pavilion over the Governor's Yamen gate. As Mrs. Foote now heard its accustomed melancholy peals reverberate announcing that the sixteen city gates were shut, it emphasized the precarious nature of her situation.

In times of peace, this old ceremony of the gate closing, had impressed her as a vesper-like, sacred rite of high solemnity; today the metallic messenger seemed to give out angry vibrations, as if with a cruel personality, sure to set the imagination conjecturing pictures of awful possibilities.

But her greatest concern was for her husband. What of him? Through the trial she was not left alone. She had a dependable comrade—Old Glory was there! In these periods of depression, she would go out and look up. It waved as if with a purpose of sympathy and steadfastness giving her fresh courage—the dear, battered flag that was the bond between her and her country with its millions of responsive souls.

"Our Father's God to Thee!"

Surely, surely, he would be protected.

She was further heartened by the confident belief that the Queen's old antagonism had been transmuted into a kindly, responsive feeling. No doubt the Western woman's latest benign act was having a deep effect upon the oriental sister, who had always been on the defensive with a reliance on cruelty as her potent weapon. Indeed, Her Majesty was giving direct evidence of sincere concern for the imperiled stranger. Night and morning she sent a message conveying warm greetings and asking what she could do for her "good friend," and Mrs. Foote responded with her accustomed graciousness. The very lack of opportunity for a clear comprehension of each other had been a stimulant to interest. And now the exercise of a reciprocity of good-will afforded a psychological seasonableness for an understanding and for the consummation

of a strong bond between the two women of divergent types.

Just as Mrs. Foote felt that she could no longer bear the strain of suspense concerning her husband, he returned.

Chapter VI

GENERAL FOOTE SUCCEEDS IN ADJUSTING DIFFICULTIES. THANKED BY GOVERNMENTS. PREPARES TO LEAVE FOR CALIFORNIA HOME. MRS. FOOTE OVERCOMES QUEEN'S INTENTION TO EXECUTE FAMILIES OF CONDEMNED REBELS. SOVEREIGN GRIEVES AT DEPARTURE OF HER AMERICAN WOMAN FRIEND. MINISTER AND MRS. FOOTE REGRETFULLY LEAVE CHUNG-DONG. TEARFULLY SALUTE THEIR TATTERED FLAG.

AFTER brilliant success as a diplomat in the conference, at Chemulpo, the United States Minister had hastened back to the capital, barely in time to save his wife from a collapse.

He soon accomplished a perfectly satisfactory adjustment of the late difficulties that had threatened to involve the entire Orient in war. For this achievement he received, in good time, the official thanks of Korea, Japan and China and was accorded the highest commendation from his own government.

Mrs. Foote felt the strain of the awful ordeal through which she had passed and her health was much impaired, and now, as she heard that the families of the condemned Liberals were to be included with the latter in the death penalty, she was weighted with a deep grief. Was there no way to avert the ruthless sacrifice of those innocent women and children? Oh, if she could meet the powerful Queen and appeal to her awakening spirit. But she saw no way—the wife of a diplomat—she was more hampered than she would have been as a Western woman of less prestige.

General Foote's mission to Korea was fulfilled. With the cordial assurance that he had creditably served his

The United States Embassy's Household

nation, he set about preparations for return to the California home.

To the Royal One this news came like a blow. She stood aghast as it was brought home to her that this meant the unutterable loss of the dependable woman and she so expressed herself in a sorrowing message. Following this testimony, she sent a warm invitation to the Minister's lady to make her a visit at the winter palace.

Her endearing "good friend" was always glad to respond to the royal call, and now, and far beyond the personal interest, she especially hailed this auspicious opportunity—trusting to some providential illumination by which she might reach the innermost heart of the power behind the throne.

Over ice and snow, in the royal palanquin, and escorted by the King's Guard, she was carried to the ruler's domain for the last time. The glorious gardens that she had enjoyed in their spring and summer splendor had been trampled down and laid waste by devastating battle, giving place to a dreary scene. And for the joy of sunny, happy days there was an atmosphere of melancholy that as they advanced was enhanced by the sight of bloody stains on the walls—gruesome memorial inscriptions of the fate of the Queen's beloved relatives.

Fearing madness, as she in imagination continually heard the piteous cries of her slaughtered kinsmen, Her Majesty had abandoned the beautiful, ghostly palace that had been the scene of such heart-break and was domiciled in another sumptuous abode.

The two tried souls now met on the common ground of suffering—woman to woman—rank and ceremony forgotten. The Queen graphically depicted her part in the late revolution's horrible tragedy, when several of her dear ones had been beheaded in the palace grounds, at her very doors, while she in terror awaited a similar fate. Haggard

and hollow-eyed, she bore awful traces of the ordeal and expressed good reason for still being distrustful of all about her. In her loneliness and extremity it was to this American, whom she had come to trust and believe in with a new-found sincerity, that she could without fear unreservedly pour out her woe.

Overcome by her own recital, the forlorn woman, forgetting oriental restraint, pathetically reached out and Mrs. Foote took the worn body in a warm, maternal clasp.

At the opportune moment the visitor led the stricken ruler to a consideration of the great subject she had at heart—the appalling intention of the Conservatives to slaughter the members of the families of the condemned Liberals. With gentle tact the Westerner sought to arouse the better spirit in the dominant figure in this awful purpose. She tried to show her the needless cruelty and the injustice of sacrificing innocent lives. The attempt but kindled fire in the merciless eyes. The strong chin tightened and the royal back stiffened in quick resentment and challenge at this interference with her prerogative. The outraged Power could not forget the atrocities lately committed. She flamed with rage and was barbaric in the determination to be avenged. She declared with pregnant significance her justification in the inflexible resolution to exact the fullest expiation just as the Liberals would have done had they not been routed. Upon any menace to or interference with her dominion, the Queen invariably had taken a leading part in plot, intrigue and treachery, and to her this law of retaliation with its severe sweeping penalty needed no defense as the righteous way of diminishing the ranks of a dangerous opposing clan. She made the determined guest strongly feel her self-centered power and the intensity of a strong personality. But, nothing daunted, the valiant suppliant persevered, pleading

earnestly while hoping to reach the better nature that she knew was there.

Then a long pause ensued. Surely the obstinate, benighted mind was quickening to the spirit's touch, for the tension of the drawn face relaxed. The royal one began to listen with an aroused interest as Mrs. Foote reminded her of the value of Confucian ethics and called attention to the fact that the highest command of Buddha was to take no life—not even that of a worm, "lest it be hindered in its upward way," and that in Confucian philosophy saving life is one of the three works of perfection. Every moment was precious as this messenger of mercy plied her genius for success in the right. When she paused, the hostess' penetrating gaze was softened into an expression of clarifying intelligence.

Here was a woman from the Occident, charging her with a lack of understanding and even of an abuse of the most beautiful teachings of the great oriental religions, and she was feeling the radiance and truths of such sincerity and goodness. All her senses were now on the alert. Down in her being was a stir of normal comprehension and it strove upward. Again there was a long silence. The great Korean was thinking deeply, the inward combat in its dying gasp.

Perhaps to the perturbed sovereign it was becoming clearer than ever before that in this fair foreigner's beneficent and beautiful philosophy as she continually applied it, lay her success in reaching the hearts of the Korean people, and that it was through this same spiritual influence that she herself had undergone the moral change whereby vindictiveness toward the Western adventurer had been turned into a confident trust. The beseecher's sincerity, her unfaltering courage and her wonderful poise, amazed the queen and exalted her consciousness till she

emerged from the throes of a mental battle with a brightened vision that transfigured the worn face into beauty.

Then she slowly and earnestly said:

"My sister, you have conquered. The lives of the innocent women and children of the condemned Liberals shall be spared!"

This magnanimous declaration rang out to the profoundly touched listener like a song of triumph over darkness. By comparison she felt her own unworthiness, and now saw this great character in whom she had always placed a strong faith revealed in the light of an all-encircling illumination that hopefully touched on the years to come. For surely thenceforth the enlightened Korean's powers would be directed by an uplifted understanding that would be exerted for the betterment of all of her countrymen.

Mrs. Foote held the startling royal declaration with a deep reverence that somewhat concealed her overwhelming grateful emotion which had in it no hint of self-gratulation, but sprang from a joy that a sister had seen the light and that other sisters might dry their tears.

Her mission accomplished, the Minister's wife prepared to retire, but as she was about to express thanks and appreciation and to bid Her Majesty farewell, the latter impulsively reaching out said:

"I am glad that you came to Korea. Do not go away. I can not speak your language but my heart understands you. Truly you are my sister."

Thus by a sympathetic human exigency were those two souls welded into a lasting confidence. Moved by such an intimate expression of love, and, grateful for the queen's splendid magnanimity, the Westerner found it hard to say the final, "Good-bye." When she did attempt it the royal one tearfully cried out, "Oh, will you not come back to Korea, my good friend?"

With an aching heart the visitor again murmured the words of parting. She was then borne away, but, as the palace gate closed, she felt that because of the earnest spirit left behind it, other gates of greater freedom would open.

The wind howled as the feet of the royal guard crunched over the bleak snow-encrusted road till the sorrowing American reached the haven of her inviting home where her husband, ever-understanding, took her in his arms. He knew that mercy had conquered intolerance.

With the final message of heartfelt regret to the lady of the American Legation, the Queen sent her many magnificent gifts. Among them was a series of white satin screens, each with ten panels whose elaborate embroidery progressively depicted the history of Korea. They had ornamented the palace and were of valuable national consequence aside from the interest they afforded as the highest examples of their type of Korean art. To attest her love to the fullest, she made the greatest possible surrender, by bestowing upon her "good friend" her own most cherished worldly possession—the favorite palanquin which had often been sent to convey the Minister's lady to and from the palace. At the time of a revolution a few years before, the crafty queen had frustrated the enemy's attempt to assassinate her by escaping in the clothes of a peasant girl who had loyally assumed the royal garb, thereby yielding up her life. When the queen's party recovered its supremacy this palanquin was made and sent to bear Her Majesty back in royal triumph.

It was not easy for the United States Minister and his wife to leave "Chung-Dong." Their trying experiences, their marvelous recompense, their suffering and their dependence upon each other, their pioneering and home-building in the ancient capital, the love of the Korean humble class and the high regard from all the people there

represented, had contributed in making the Far East sacred to them. If they had freely given the best of themselves in Korea, they had a lasting joy in the knowledge that warm hearts from palace to hovel beat for them there. The weight of their trials had been balanced by fruitful compensation. No doubt, beyond all else, Mrs. Foote's heart reached out to the dear Queen who had pathetically besought her not to leave her. It was a call she could not forget. It was a life interwoven with her own and in spirit they would never be separated.

When the legation gate closed for the last time upon the couple all the servants followed them for five miles moaning and crying at the loss of their beloved mistress.

From the distance the two comrades reverently looked back at their nation's flag. It had conciliated enemies. It had averted terrible wars. It had sheltered the oppressed under its folds and it had given courage, strength and protection to its entrusted servant and his wife in time of direst peril. As it swept out over the snow-covered roofs and walls like a rainbow of promise in a sombre sky, the minister and his wife arose and solemnly saluted it. It seemed to take on a personality as being of their household and pathetically to beckon them back, then gravely to waft them a regretful "good-bye." And something filled their throats and choked their speech for something of their hearts was left with that weather-beaten, precious symbol of their country. Tearfully they watched it till it became a speck over the legation and melted into the heavens.

Chapter VII

IMPERIAL HONORS AT TOKYO. ARRIVAL AT SAN FRANCISCO. AFTER SIX MONTHS MRS. FOOTE PASSES AWAY. HER BENEFICENT INFLUENCE ON KOREAN QUEEN BEARS FRUIT. THE QUEEN'S LAST VALIANT STAND FOR HER COUNTRY. GENERAL FOOTE PASSES AWAY. THEIR PATRIOTIC SERVICE THE NATION'S HERITAGE.

At Nagasaki, where the Japanese hailed them as saviors of their countrymen in the late coup-d'etat, every possible honor was accorded General and Mrs. Foote. Chief among the unique entertainments offered was a remarkable theatrical performance that by order of the governor of the place had been arranged in anticipation of their coming. It was a thrilling representation of the scenes of the late revolution at the Korean capital, including the rescue of the Japanese at the American Legation. As the drama proceeded, the immense audience went wild with excitement. At its close when the folds of the American flag fluttered out over the heads of the United States Minister and his lady, and then majestically waved back and forth over the throng there was stupendous enthusiasm. All sprang to their feet and when the band struck up "The Star Spangled Banner," the old ram-shackle building, chosen for its great seating capacity and traditions, reverberated with the music and shouting and many rushed to carry General Foote out in triumph as he bowed his thanks and, with Mrs. Foote and Japanese friends, hurried to his carriage.

The United States Minister was accorded every courteous attention when he reached Tokyo. At the especial

audience conjointly given to the distinguished American and his lady, the Emperor made an address in which he expressed his personal thanks and the thanks of the nation for the rescue of his countrymen in their extremity. To this General Foote appreciatively responded in words which evoked still greater enthusiasm from this people to whom he had already become a heroic figure. Then, acting upon the royal indication, Mrs. Foote stepped forward with her majestic air and gracefully made the three deferential bows as she advanced to the presence of the Emperor and Empress. Her Majesty at once spoke to the United States Minister's lady expressing admiration for the courage and heroism she had shown in perilously remaining under her own flag and in assisting in the rescue of the oppressed. She warmly thanked her both personally and in the name of all of the women of the Empire for the great compassion that had been shown to her suffering people. The recipient of the distinction was much touched and replied with characteristic modesty and dignity. This tribute to the fair American from so high a source was regarded as one of the greatest honors conferred upon a woman in modern times.

The Empress in private audience at the palace further emphasized her regard by presenting the United States Minister's wife with an exquisitely beautiful tea-set of finest porcelain cups and silver pots and saucers and a silver salver.

There were those who did not hestitate to attack in words the Queen of Korea, but these found quick rebuke from Mrs. Foote who silenced such criticism with, "Pardon me, friends, but I can not allow any disparging remarks against the Queen of whose complex but nobly aspiring nature you have not a fair understanding. Out of my own experience with her has grown a deep attachment for her and a confidence in her desire to uplift Korea."

Tea Set of Porcelain and Silver presented to Mrs. Foote by the
Empress of Japan at the Palace in Tokyo

The stay of the American Minister and his wife in Tokyo was not without its amusing features, one of which the General often chuckled over. As the guests of some of the nobility, he and Mrs. Foote were taken to the temples where in the outer courts all ceremoniously removed their shoes. Passing in, the lady saw her husband glancing at her feet with the tell-tale twinkle in his eye.

"Now, what is it?" she whispered.

"Just a wee hole in your stocking, Oh, ever immaculate one!" he replied.

"Oh, Lucius," she exclaimed under her breath.

To her, always so perfectly groomed, it was no comedy; it was tragedy. Then recovering and holding her head once more erect, she said to him, "Anyone with a particle of comprehension will know that it is but an accidental break of the thread in a seam."

"Most assuredly," was the comforting rejoinder.

It was presumed that there the episode closed, but the next day she said:

"Lucius, do you think that the Prince saw?"

"Saw what?" he queried as he looked up from his papers.

"The hole in my stocking."

He threw back his head and laughed heartily as he replied, "Certainly not, my dear Rose!"

"Now, Lucius, are you speaking truthfully, or is that a diplomatic evasion?" she demanded.

The United States Minister answered gallantly and said:

"He did not see. The Prince is a gentleman."

"Thus," the General would conclude when rehearsing the tale, "was that gracious poise, which neither riot nor revolution could disturb quite put to rout by a hole in a stocking-heel!"

As soon as the Minister and his wife boarded the homeward steamer at Yokohama, they were called to the side of the ship. Below, in a sampan that rocked perilously in the churning sea, they beheld the General's almost indispensable Japanese servant and his little wife, Mrs. Foote's equally invaluable maid, each with baskets of luggage for a voyage. They held up imploring hands in a final appeal. The American couple, who had resisted the persistent importunities of the faithful pair to accompany them and devotedly serve them forever and who had bidden them repeated farewells, again denied their petition, refusing to uproot them from all their native ties. Thereupon the little couple decided further effort was useless and tossed up boxes of beautiful "Kumsha" to the steamer's deck. The Americans again felt a pull at their heart-strings as they watched those loyal partakers of their Korean fortunes row to the oriental shore, plaintively calling back across the water, "Sayonara!" "Sayonara!" ("Farewell! Farewell!")

Soon after their arrival in San Francisco, physicians pronounced Mrs. Foote's health fatally affected by the trials of the terrible revolution added to the unsanitary conditions of the old capital. Six months later she happily made the transition to the Beyond, not having forgotten to send her love and a message to the cherished Queen.

Over her casket was draped the Stars and Stripes. In a simple service, Dr. Horatio Stebbins of the Unitarian church paid tribute to the "noble woman whose spirituality had won the confidence of the conservative Korean Queen and her people, and who, refusing proffered protection, stood steadfastly under her flag at risk of her life and took the hounded and oppressed under the shadow of her wings."

Several years earlier Mrs. Foote was in Chile with her husband where he represented our Government. Her

ministry to the Chilean poor had never been forgotten. Upon learning of her death, a large number whom she had there befriended came together in grateful and loving remembrance, and, contributing their small coins, went in a body to the cathedral and had a mass said for the repose of her soul—although she was not of their religious faith.

The Korean Queen, who had never given up the hope that her good American friend would return, was deeply grieved when informed of her death, and, together with the King, sent General Foote tender expressions of regret and sympathy.

She kept her faith and saved the women and children of the condemned Liberals.

Mrs. Foote's benign influence over the Queen bore its fruit, for the sovereign who loved her country became more and more amenable to progressive ideas, her ascending thought expressing itself in new devotion to her people and a more intelligent patriotism that looked far beyond herself and her day, and courageously risked her very life in an effort to save Korea from the dreaded dominion of Japan.

Among the plans she had at heart for the advancement of her countrymen at the time of her tragic death, was the establishment of a permanent school for the sons of nobles, toward which she had subscribed $30,000 and to which she was additionally to make an annual allowance of $20,000 to $30,000. By her request the teachers of this school were to be from American colleges, for she placed unquestioned confidence in the countrymen of her "good friend." She manifested constantly an increased generosity and lovableness that not only affected the Koreans, but smoothed the path of the noble Western women who had come faithfully to work among them. These she freely aided and stimulated by a warm, personal sympathy and

by every possible encouragement, not the least of which was expressed through substantial, munificent gifts.

The enemies of this wonderful Korean Queen well knew her remarkable ability and statesmanship, and saw in her the greatest menace and danger to their designs. Especially was this emphasized when, after her own self-reconstruction, she, with an enthusiasm and zeal transmuted by her occidental friend, worked for her people on a higher plane, and in her enlightened efforts for them, secured new adherents winning their dependable loyalty.

When in 1895 Japan established a protectorate over Korea, the attempt at hasty and radical changes there was resisted by the Court Party at Seoul headed by the invincible Queen. Aided by the entire Min family, with a patriotic spirit and at an awful risk, she planned a daring coup d'etat with the determination to disband the soldiers who had been trained by Japanese officers, and to replace the pro-Japanese partisans of reform in the cabinet with her pro-Korean friends. It was her last valiant fight. The result was a counter-plot to seize the King and the dangerous Queen with the aim of obtaining control of the government in the interest of the pro-Nipponese and reform party. In carrying out this plot the powerful and discerning head of Korea was made way with. It was said that she might have escaped, but would not desert the aged Dowager Queen, and relied somewhat upon the promise that her life would be safeguarded. The friend in whose loyalty she placed greatest faith assisted in her betrayal. She was horribly and brutally murdered. Her body was hacked to pieces in the palace grounds and then burned—only a little finger bone being recovered for honorable burial and worship.

It took the Astrologers two years to decide upon the propitious place for her burial. All her country was interested. Finally a beautiful tract of 1000 acres lying

a few miles outside the walls of Seoul was chosen. It included mountain, hill, level rice-field, village and stream. All habitations were removed, tens of thousands of young trees were set out and fortunes were spent in making it marvelously beautiful. The grave is on the highest hilltop and is encircled by a carved balustrade of stone and here and there are significant images. Before the grave is a splendid block of polished marble serving as a table for sacrificial offering, and in front of it is an elaborately carved stone lantern.

This great Queen of far Cathay was given the posthumous title of "Empress." Two years had elapsed since her death. She had not been forgotten by her people. Indeed, as they helplessly realized that Korea's individuality was being stamped out, even those who had continued hostile to her, came to honor the memory of the strong character that fought so valiantly to avert such a catastrophe. And now her state funeral gave them the opportunity to express their appreciation. It was the pathetic tribute of a country that was being fatally merged into the family of its ambitious neighbor, Japan. The entire city turned out to do her honor. For the Koreans the day was sad indeed. To them it was the burial of their beloved nation, of which the queen had been the life and inspiration.

Visitors to the fascinating old capital make a pilgrimage to this noted tomb of the oriental queen who had such a heroic and dramatic life and such a tragic ending.

Mrs. Foote's affectionate request was, that in the event of her passing, the cherished palanquin should go to the author of this little story.

It was said that nowhere in the Orient was there so interesting and so beautiful a conveyance. It reached its destination together with rare Satsuma ware, one of the screens, and other elegant gifts from the Korean palace.

The palanquin was lost in the great fire, but General Foote saved the tea set when the outer walls of the building were hot. Today that Imperial gift has a permanent place in the author's home—a home to which the General and his wife loved to come.

The palanquin was sentient with the lives of an oriental and an occidental woman, each of whom had left the hampering walls of sense and passed through the royal gate of the Beyond. That the animating Christ spirit made a common bond between the two here, gives assurance of glad fruition for them in their escape to the larger liberty.

Did Rose Foote long for more years, it was but that she might further aid her fellowmen.

If this story of her patriotism inspires those of us so fortunate as to be at our country's call today, then this American diplomat's helpmate will have served her flag again.